REMARKS

By this amendment, Claims 1, 13, 14, and 26 have been amended, Claims 12 and 25 have been cancelled, and no claims have been added. Hence, Claims 1-9, 13-22, and 26 are pending in this application.

THE PENDING CLAIMS ARE PATENTABLE OVER THE CITED ART

Claims 1-2, 4-9, 12-15, 17-22, and 25-26 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as allegedly being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,260,050 by Yost et al. ("*Yost*"). Claims 3 and 16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being obvious in view of *Yost* and U.S. Patent Application No. 2002/0178254 by Brittenham et al. ("*Brittenham*"). The Applicant has amended the pending claims to more particular point out and distinctly claim the subject matter to which patent protection is being sought.

Each of the pending claims recites at least one element that is not disclosed, taught, or suggested by the cited art, either individually or in combination.

Independent Claim 1

With regard to independent Claim 1, there is recited:

> In a process comprising at least one activity, a computer implemented method for performing an activity, comprising:
>> receiving a message, from a process management engine, to perform an activity which calls for invocation of a service provided by a service application, said service being invocable using a protocol, and said service, when invoked, provides one or more results of performing said service;
>> obtaining a service definition for said service, wherein the service definition comprises mapping information that maps one or more attributes associated with said activity to one or more parameters used by said service, wherein said service definition for said service comprises an indication that said protocol is to be used to invoke said service;

selecting a first set of logic, from a plurality of sets of logic, based upon said indication in said service definition for said service, wherein said first set of logic implements said protocol;

executing said first set of logic which implements said protocol to generate a service invocation, wherein said service invocation is generated based upon, at least a portion of, said mapping information in the service definition, and is in compliance with said protocol;

sending said service invocation to said service application to invoke said service;

receiving a reply from said service application which comprises said one or more results; and

providing at least a portion of said one or more results to said process management engine to complete performance of said activity (emphasis added).

At least the above-bolded features of Claim 1 are not disclosed, taught, or suggested by the cited art.

Claim 1 provides an advantageous method for performing an activity. According to Claim 1, a message to perform an activity that calls for the invocation of a service is received from a process management engine. The service, when invoked, provides one or more results of performing the service. A service definition for the service is obtained. The service definition comprises mapping information that maps one or more attributes associated with the activity to one or more parameters used by the service. The service definition for the service comprises an indication that the protocol is to be used to invoke the service. A first set of logic is selected based on the indication in the service definition. The first set of logic implements the protocol. The first set of logic is executed to generate a service invocation. A service invocation is generated based upon at least a portion of the mapping information in the service definition. The generated service invocation is sent to a service application to invoke the service. A reply, from the service application, which comprises the one or more results of performing the service, is received. At least a portion of the one or more results is provided to the process management engine to complete the performance of the activity.

By encapsulating the logic that maps one or more attributes associated with the activity to one or more parameters used by the service in the mapping information, when the requirements of the service change, the mapping information may be updated to reflect the requirements of the changed service without developing new code to support the invocation of the changed service. In this way, substantial time and effort for developing new code to support the changed service is avoided. Further, since the information contained in the service definition is fairly basic, in terms of substance and technical complexity, the service definition may be created by a relatively low-skilled end user, rather than a highly skilled technical specialist.

The combination of elements recited in Claim 1 is neither disclosed nor suggested by *Yost*. *Yost* is directed towards an approach for adapting reports for presentation on disparate output devices. A service, as taught by *Yost*, is a report that is scheduled to be run against a data warehouse by a server system (Col. 6, lines 17-20). After the server system executes a query against a data warehouse, the server system provides the data retrieved from the data warehouse to a broadcast module. The broadcast module formats the retrieved data, and forwards the formatted data to an output device. (Abstract; Col. 3, lines 58 – Col. 5, line 45).

It is unclear what portion of *Yost* the Office Action alleges is analogous to a service definition as claimed. The portion of *Yost* cited by the Office Action to show the feature of "obtaining a service definition for said service" (Col. 6, lines 8-17 and Col. 10, lines 31-43) merely discusses the functions performed by the broadcast module, and in particular, a service definition module contained therein.

While the service definition module of *Yost* has a similar name to the service definition as recited in Claim 1, there are sharp differences between the service definition module of *Yost* and the express requirements of the service definition of Claim 1. The service definition module of

Yost allows a user to define how the data retrieved from the data warehouse should be formatted and when it should be retrieved. Significantly, the service definition module does not contain any data that indicates what protocol should be used to invoke a service as expressly required by Claim 1.

In view of the fundamental differences between Claim 1 and *Yost*, numerous elements of Claim 1 are not disclosed, taught, or suggested by *Yost*. For example, *Yost* does not disclose, teach, or suggest the element of "selecting a first set of logic, from a plurality of sets of logic, based upon said indication in said service definition for said service, wherein said first set of logic implements said protocol." As explained above, the portion of *Yost* cited to show a service definition merely describes a module that determines when to retrieve and how to format data retrieved from a data warehouse, but does not describe anything that contains an indication of what protocol to use to invoke a service. Formatting the output to be sent to an output device is not analogous to indicating what protocol to use when invoking a service. In fact, *Yost* is clear that server system 14, not broadcast module 20, performs the service of *Yost* (see Col. 4, lines 12-17 and Col. 6, lines 17-21); as a result, the portion cited by the Office Action to show a service definition as recited in Claim 1 does not perform the service of *Yost*. Moreover, no portion of *Yost* describes selecting a set of logic based on an indication in a service definition as claimed. As a result, this element cannot be disclosed, taught, or suggested by *Yost*.

The above-argued elements are also not disclosed or suggested by Brittenham. In fact, the Examiner has not relied on Brittenham to show anything other than that SOAP may be used as a service invocation protocol. That being the case, even if Yost and Brittenham are combined, assuming for the sake of argument that it would have been obvious to combine the references, the combination still would not teach or suggest all of the elements of claim 1.

As at least one element of Claim 1 is not disclosed, taught, or suggest by the cited art, it is respectfully submitted that Claim 1 is patentable over the cited art and is in condition for allowance.

Claims 2-9, 13-22, and 26

Independent Claim 14 contains features similar to that discussed above with reference to Claim 1, except that Claim 14 is recited in computer-readable medium format. Consequently, it is respectfully submitted that for at least the reasons given above with respect to Claim 1, that Claim 14 is also patentable over the cited art and is in condition for allowance.

Claims 2-9, 13, 15-22, and 26 are dependent claims, each of which depends (directly or indirectly) on one of the claims discussed above. Each of Claims 2-9, 13, 15-22, and 26 is therefore allowable for the reasons given above for the claim on which it depends. In addition, each of Claims 2-9, 13, 15-22, and 26 introduces one or more additional limitations that independently render it patentable. However, due to the fundamental differences already identified, to expedite the positive resolution of this case a separate discussion of those limitations is not included at this time, although the Applicants reserve the right to further point out the differences between the cited art and the novel features recited in the dependent claims.

CONCLUSION

It is respectfully submitted that all of the pending claims are in condition for allowance and the issuance of a notice of allowance is respectfully requested. If there are any additional charges, please charge them to Deposit Account No. 50-1302.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if the Examiner believes that such contact would be helpful in furthering the prosecution of this application.

Respectfully submitted,

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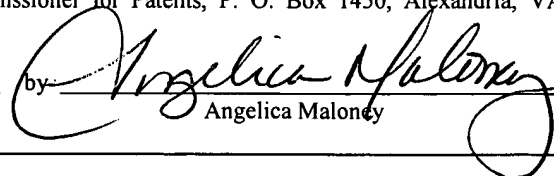Christopher J. Brokaw
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